

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Emergency Assistance Program (EA)

Fiscal Year 2014, First Quarterly Report

Department of Housing and Community Development

November 5, 2013



Department of Housing and Community Development
EA Legislative Report
Quarter 1, SFY 2014

During Quarter 1, 3,788 families applied for EA, a 26 percent increase from the previous quarter, and a 29 percent increase compared to the first quarter of FY13. Consistent with this increased demand for EA, 1,775 families were placed in EA shelter or hotels/motels during Quarter 1, 64 percent more than previous quarter and 41% more than Quarter 1 of FY13. In addition, 57 EA eligible families were diverted from shelter with HomeBASE Household Assistance, a flexible benefit of up to \$4,000 annually to help them retain their current housing or support them in seeking alternative housing.

The Boston regional office continued to serve as the entry point for the greatest number of families placed in shelter or motels, 425 families in Quarter 1, accounting for 24 percent of all placements, followed by the Springfield office at 15 percent and the Brockton office at 13 percent.

Most families entering EA shelter/motels (52%) were eligible due to a health and safety risk, while eviction was the reasons for homelessness for 13 percent of families and domestic violence for another 12 percent. Of those families experiencing a health and safety risk, most (61%) were in irregular housing situations. 22 percent were living in situations unfit for human habitation, and another 17 percent were experiencing health and safety problems related to their hosts' behavior (violent conduct, substance abuse, or mental illness).

During Quarter 1, HomeBASE Rental Assistance (HBRA) expired for approximately 1,300 families. 241 of these families were placed in shelter or hotels/motels when their benefit timed out, accounting for 14% of entries during Quarter 1. Families ending HBRA at the end of the quarter may have applied for and entered EA in subsequent months. At time of reporting, only 17 percent of families whose HBRA benefit expired during Quarter 1 had entered an EA shelter or hotel/motel.

To accommodate demand for EA beyond DHCD's 2,023 contracted shelter units, the Department continued to rely on hotels/motels. During Quarter 1, there was a daily average caseload of 1,609 families in hotels/motels representing 44 percent of the total number of families in EA. Due to the continuing demand for EA, DHCD began contracting for additional shelter units. Forty-four of the 400 units planned for FY14 went on-line during the last two weeks of September.

During Quarter 1, 1,106 families exited the EA system. 157 (14%) of these families left with an MRVP voucher. Forty of the families receiving an MRVP (4% of Quarter 1 exits) left the EA system with additional support from HomeBASE Household Assistance, while another 117 families (11%) left EA with HomeBASE household assistance only.

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EA Applications and Entries

All Applications	SFY 2014 Quarter 1	Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD
			Jul	Aug	Sept	
Families Applying to EA	3,788	3,008	1,203	1,449	1,323	3,788
Families Entering Shelter and Hotel/Motels or Diverted with HomeBASE Household Assistance	1,832	1,142	528	697	607	1,832
Families Entering Shelter & Hotels/Motels	1,775	1,083	513	673	589	1,775
% Entering Shelter or Hotels/Motels	97%	95%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Families Diverted with HomeBASE HA	57	59	15	24	18	57
% Entering HomeBASE	3%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%

Note: Families applying for EA are an unduplicated count. Since families may apply multiple times, the sum of monthly data do not equal the quarterly total.

Sources: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data and Tracker.

EA Health & Safety Assessments

	SFY 2014 Quarter 1	Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD
			Jul	Aug	Sept	
H&S Assessments Conducted by DCF	790	651	278	274	238	790
Families Determined at Risk	656	545	225	231	200	656
% Referrals at Risk	83%	84%	81%	84%	84%	83%
Shelter Diversions	134	106	53	43	38	134
% Referrals Diverted	17%	16%	19%	16%	16%	17%

Source: DCF Monthly Homeless H&S Assessment Reports.

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EA Shelter Entries by Region

Regional Office	SFY 2014 Quarter 1		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		July	Aug	Sept	# Families	% of Total
All Offices	1,775	100%	1,083	513	673	589	1,775	100%
Boston	425	24%	259	120	169	136	425	24%
Brockton	237	13%	148	78	80	79	237	13%
Fall River	27	2%	16	7	8	12	27	2%
Fitchburg	4	<1%	3	3	1	0	4	<1%
Framingham	20	1%	8	5	9	6	20	1%
Greenfield	22	1%	10	6	8	8	22	1%
Holyoke	90	5%	58	31	33	26	90	5%
Hyannis	18	1%	24	4	6	8	18	1%
Lawrence	114	6%	42	20	59	35	114	6%
Lowell	100	6%	42	25	37	38	100	6%
Malden	114	6%	70	26	42	46	114	6%
New Bedford	22	1%	16	6	6	10	22	1%
North Shore (Salem)	95	5%	67	23	43	29	95	5%
Pittsfield/North Adams	3	<1%	4	1	1	1	3	<1%
Plymouth	16	<1%	5	6	4	6	16	<1%
Revere/Chelsea	119	7%	66	39	37	43	119	7%
Southbridge	8	<1%	2	4	1	3	8	<1%
Springfield	265	15%	187	80	101	84	265	15%
Taunton	40	2%	23	12	17	11	40	2%
Worcester	36	2%	33	17	11	8	36	2%

Source: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data.

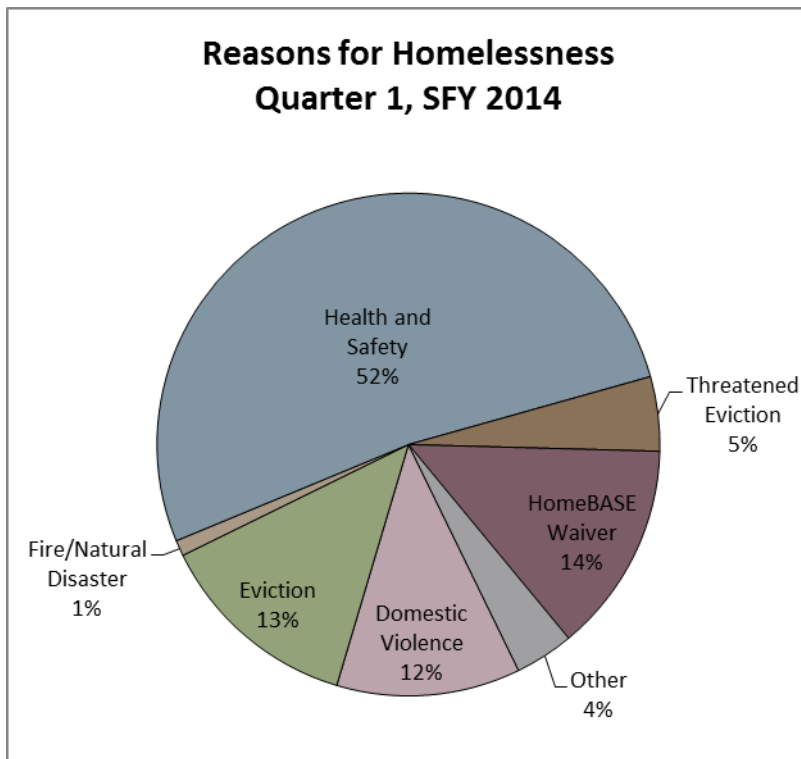
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**Reason for Homelessness,
Families Entering Shelter/Motels**

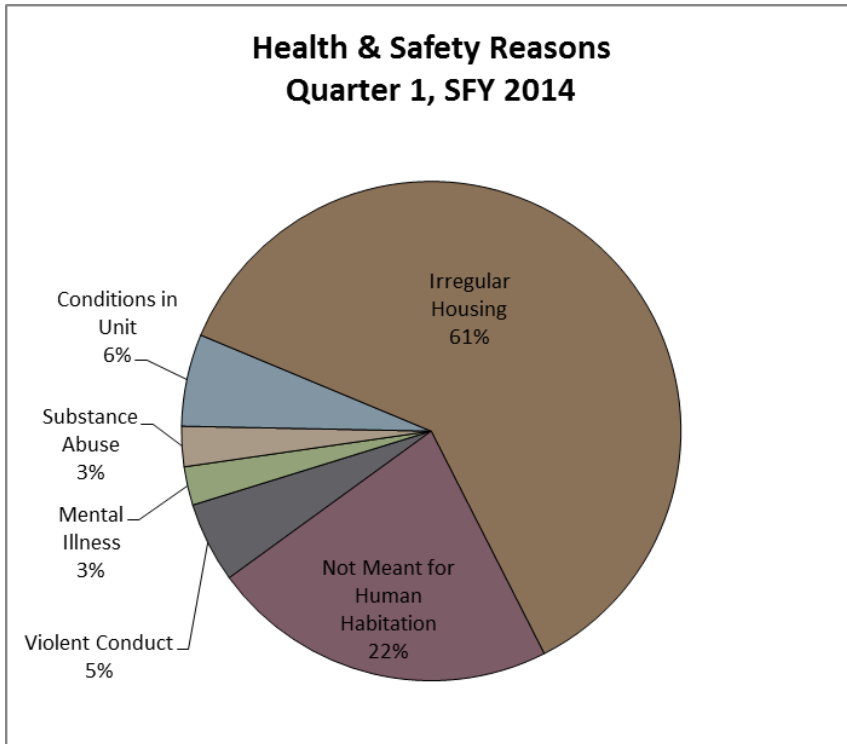
Reason for Homelessness	SFY 2014 Quarter 1		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		Jul	Aug	Sept	# Families	% of Total
Total	1,775	100%	1,083	513	673	589	1,775	100%
Domestic Violence	210	12%	147	67	77	66	210	12%
Eviction	233	13%	161	71	86	76	233	13%
Fire/Natural Disaster	18	1%	17	8	7	3	18	1%
Health and Safety	921	52%	631	287	318	316	921	52%
Threatened Eviction	85	5%	58	24	28	33	85	5%
HomeBASE Waiver	241	14%	0	39	133	69	241	14%
Other	67	4%	69	17	24	26	67	4%

Note: Data includes families placed in an EA shelters or hotels/motels who declined their placements.

Source: DHCD Placement Unit data.



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Shelter Exits

	SFY 2013 Quarter 4		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		Jul	Aug	Sept	# Families	% of Total
Total Shelter/Motel Exits	1,106	100%	979	358	358	390	1,106	100%
Exiting with HomeBASE Only	212	19%	162	63	103	46	212	19%
Exiting with MRVP Only	117	11%	137	49	41	27	117	11%
Exiting with HomeBASE and MRVP	40	4%	51	17	8	15	40	4%
Other Exits	737	67%	629	229	206	302	737	67%

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EA Shelter and Hotel/Motel Caseload

Daily Utilization by Shelter Type	Quarter 1 SFY 2014	
	# of Families	% of Total Daily Caseload
Shelter (Congregate and Scattered)	2,022	56%
Motel	1,609	44%
All Families	3,631	100%
Caseload Difference from Previous Quarter	341	
% Change from Previous Quarter	10%	

Note: Number of families indicates the average daily number during the quarter.

**Length of Stay and Cost of Families Exiting EA
During Quarter 1**

	Min.	Max.	Average
Days in EA Shelter or Hotels/Motels	0	1,635	195
Cost Per Episode	\$108	\$176,580	\$21,060

Notes:

Cost per episode assumes an average daily rate of \$108 (the weighted average of the shelter and hotel/motel rates).

The average daily rate includes additional costs incurred through housing stabilization and services coordination provided to families in EA. It is possible to have a length of stay of zero days with associated costs if a family is approved for EA and placed in a shelter or hotel/motel but abandons their placement.

HomeBASE Caseload

Type of Assistance	Number of Families
Rental Assistance	3,618
Household Assistance	4,400

Note: Data indicate families active in the HomeBASE program on October 31, 2013.